

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 093093
ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SIG-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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R 112235Z APR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BONN
XMT AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY BANGUI
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY KIGALI
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY MBABANE
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY BISSAU
AMEMBASSY GABORONE

UNCLAS STATE 093093
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 STATE 093093

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:PFOR

SUBJECT:DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS BRIEFING, APRIL 11.

FOLLOWING ARE UNOFFICIAL, UNCORRECTED EXCERPTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS BRIEFING. IF NECESSARY OFFICIAL VERSION WILL FOLLOW.

Q: WHAT HAVE YOU GOT ON THE SECRETARY'S TRIP AS IT SHAPES UP NOW TODAY AS COMPARED WITH YESTERDAY OR THE DAY BEFORE?

A: I REALLY DON'T HAVE MUCH MORE, BARRY; I'M SORRY.

Q: HOW DOES RHODESIA FIT IN, THE STOP IN RHODESIA. IS THAT ON HIS SCHEDULE NOW?

A: YES.

Q: IS IT BACK WHERE IT WAS -- BEFORE HE GOES TO LONDON?

A: I THINK THAT'S MY UNDERSTANDING.

Q: WHAT'S THE PURPOSE NOW -- I MEAN IN LIGHT OF THE RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT'S REFUSAL TO ATTEND A CONFERENCE -- AGAIN, REJECTION OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PLAN? WHAT'S THE PURPOSE OF THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO RHODESIA?

A: WELL, THE SECRETARY SAID YESTERDAY THAT HE WOULD GO THE LAST MILE AND MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO BRING ABOUT A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT OF THE RHODESIA ISSUE; AND THAT IS WHY SECRETARY VANCE AND FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN PLAN TO GO
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UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 093093

TO SALISBURY, AND I THINK IT IS ON APRIL 17TH, TO MEET WITH THE INTERNAL LEADERS.

Q: WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT REACTION TO YESTERDAY'S STATEMENT IN RHODESIA?

A: I DON'T REALLY HAVE A SPECIFIC REACTION TO THAT, MURREY. THEY HAVE INDICATED A WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS FURTHER THE ISSUE OF AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING.

Q: HAVE THEY INDICATED A WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS THE MEETING FURTHER? I THOUGHT THAT THEY HAD SAID THAT THEY HAD REJECTED THE MEETING.

A: THEY HAVE INDICATED A WILLINGNESS -- THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL, THAT THEY WOULD BE HAPPY TO SIT DOWN WITH SECRETARY VANCE TO DISCUSS WHERE WE GO FROM HERE ON RESOLVING THE RHODESIAN PROBLEM. AND INCLUDED IN THAT OVERALL FRAMEWORK THEY HAVE BEEN WILLING TO DISCUSS IDEAS WHICH SECRETARY VANCE AND SECRETARY OWEN MIGHT WISH TO PUT BEFORE THEM FOR THEIR CONSIDERATION.

AS YOU KNOW, IT IS THE PUBLICLY STATED POSITION OF THIS ADMINISTRATION THAT WE BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL IN THE OVERALL PROCESS FOR ALL THE PARTIES TO GET TOGETHER AND TALK ABOUT WHERE WE GO FROM HERE.

Q: TOM, IS SECRETARY OWEN GOING TO BE IN SALISBURY WHEN THE SECRETARY IS THERE?

A: I BELIEVE SO, YES.

Q: TOM, DO YOU HAVE THE COMPOSITION OF THE AMERICAN PARTY?

A: NO, SIR; I DON'T. I'LL TRY TO GET THAT FOR YOU.
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 093093

Q: TOM, NO SECRETARY OF STATE HAS VISITED SALISBURY. IS THERE ANYTHING YOU CAN SAY AS TO WHY THIS SECRETARY OF STATE HAS DECIDED TO MEET WITH THESE PEOPLE IN RHODESIA?

A: NO. I DON'T THINK I WANT TO LEAD YOU TO BELIEVE THAT THERE'S ANY SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE TO THAT, BERNIE. I MEAN THAT'S WHERE THEY ARE.

Q: ARE THERE ANY OTHER STOPS PLANNED IN AFRICA BESIDE TANZANIA AND RHODESIA?

A: NOT TO MY KNOWLEDGE, ROY. NOW, THERE MAY BE A REFUELING STOP OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT, BUT THERE ARE NO FURTHER SUBSTANTIVE TALKS PRIOR TO GOING TO LONDON IN MY UNDERSTANDING.

Q: I MEAN IS HE GOING TO HAVE ANY TALKS OR IS ANYONE GOING TO HAVE TALKS WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS AT SOME POINT?

A: WE ARE IN A CONTINUOUS PROCESS OF CONSULTATIONS WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS ON PROBLEMS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THOSE KINDS OF MEETINGS WILL CONTINUE.

Q: CAN YOU BE ANY MORE SPECIFIC ABOUT WHAT HAS COME BACK FROM AMBASSADOR LOW AFTER YESTERDAY'S MEETING THAT GIVES THE SECRETARY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE INTERNAL FORCES ARE STILL CONSIDERING THE ALL-PARTIES MEETING DESPITE THE STATEMENT THAT WAS ISSUED YESTERDAY?

Q: IS AMBASSADOR YOUNG GOING TO BE PART OF THE SECRETARY'S PARTY?
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 093093

A: I THINK SO, YES.

Q: TOM, THE OSTENSIBLE PURPOSE, AS I GATHER IT, OF THIS TRIP TO AFRICA IS TO PRODUCE AN ALL PARTIES CONFERENCE.

NOW, THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT PEOPLE SAID PUBLICLY YES-TERDAY THEY REJECT SUCH A PROPOSITION AHEAD OF TIME, BUT THEY ARE HAPPY TO HAVE MR. VANCE COME TO SALISBURY.

I MEAN SINCE NO SECRETARY OF STATE HAS EVER VISITED SALISBURY OBVIOUSLY IT IS A PLUS FOR THEIR GOVERNMENT.

WHAT IS IT IN THIS TRIP THAT ISN'T A FOREGONE DISASTER?

A: I DON'T THINK THAT I WOULD AGREE WITH THAT ASSESSMENT, OBVIOUSLY. THIS IS A VERY COMPLEX SITUATION. ALL THESE PEOPLE HAVE A STAKE IN WHAT HAPPENS IN RHODESIA IN THE FUTURE. I DON'T THINK THAT THE TRIP IS GOING TO RISE OR FALL ON ONE PARTICULAR ASPECT OF IT. I THINK THAT WE HAVE TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT TERMING THINGS EITHER A SUCCESS OR A DISASTER. IT IS A VERY COMPLEX SITUATION AND WE BELIEVE THAT IT WILL BE USEFUL AT THIS LEVEL TO HAVE THESE TALKS TO SEE WHETHER THERE ISN'T SOME

WAY TO MOVE FORWARD FROM WHERE WE ARE.

Q: THE SECRETARY IS LEAVING ON THIS TRIP, HOWEVER, WITHOUT ANY CLEAR STATEMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES OF WHAT IT INTENDS, WHAT THE PROSPECTS ARE. IS THERE NO INTENTION FOR THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO ISSUE ANY KIND OF CLARIFYING STATEMENT ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF THE SECRETARY'S TRIP BEYOND THE FACT THAT HE IS STILL GROPING FOR AN ALL PARTIES MEETING, WHICH HAS NOW BEEN PUBLICLY REJECTED BY THE INTERNAL ACTION IN RHODESIA?

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UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 06 STATE 093093

A: I AM NOT AWARE THAT WE HAVE PLANS TO ISSUE ANY FURTHER STATEMENTS. NO.

I THINK THAT THE SECRETARY AND THE PRESIDENT HAVE STATED IN THE PAST THAT THE PURPOSE OF THIS TRIP, WHICH IS TO DISCUSS FACE TO FACE AT THIS HIGH LEVEL WHERE WE

MIGHT GO.

Q: TRANSKEI HAS BROKEN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA.

DOES THE UNITED STATES HAVE ANY INTENTION OF CONTACTING TRANSKEI OR DISCUSSING THIS SUBJECT OF SETTING UP DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS?

A. NO. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF A BREAK IN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TRANSKEI AND SOUTH AFRICA CHANGES THE FUNDAMENTAL CHARACTER OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEM. WE HAVE NEVER RECOGNIZED TRANSKEI AS AN INDEPENDENT ENTITY AND THERE IS NO QUESTION OF OUR DOING SO NOW.

Q: OR UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES?

A: I DIDN'T SAY THAT.

WE ARE GIVING NO CONSIDERATION TO IT IN LIGHT OF THIS NEW CHANGE HERE.

Q: WOULD YOU ATTEMPT TO RECONCILE FOR US THE FACT THAT THE RHODESIAN LEADERS ARE SAYING PUBLICLY THAT THEY REJECT AN ALL PARTIES CONFERENCE AND YOU ARE SAYING THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 07 STATE 093093

THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE THEY ARE NOW READY TO SIT DOWN AND DISCUSS AN ALL PARTIES CONFERENCE?

THERE IS A FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THOSE TWO POSITIONS.

A: YES.

I AM SORRY. I AM AFRAID I AM NOT ABLE TO GO FURTHER THAN I HAVE.

Q: TOM, COULD I MAKE AN APPEAL?

THERE IS TREMENDOUS INTEREST IN THE SECRETARY'S TRIP TO AFRICA, GREAT CONFUSION AS EXEMPLIFIED HERE. IF YOU COULD PRODUCE AN AUTHORITATIVE FIGURE THIS AFTERNOON OR EARLY TOMORROW MORNING, I THINK IT WOULD BE MUCH APPRECIATED.
VANCE

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